2008

REGION FOUR PARKS DIVISION INTERPRETIVE SERVICES REPORT







The following report summarizes public interpretive and educational programs and services provided by the Region Four Parks Division in 2008.

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Visitation

Summer visitation includes the months of June, July and August. The table below compares the summer visitation for years 2005 through 2008.

Summer	Giant Springs
Visitation	State Park
2005	112,522
2006	116,608
2007	98,320
2008	108,964



Visitors take a look at the famous Giant Springs



Park Ranger explains the history of the waterfalls

Great Falls of the Missouri River (Ryan Dam) Park Ranger Hour

A ranger talks about the geology and history surrounding the waterfalls.

Date	Attendance	Comments
5/30	40	Beautiful day to start programming
6/6	22	
6/13	38	
6/20	32	
6/27	30	
7/4	62	Busy Friday Fourth of July
7/11	4	Slow weekend for all programming
Total	228	Total increase of 46 more people than in 2007



Great Falls of the Missouri River pre-1915



Great Falls of the Missouri River 2008

Black Eagle Falls Park Ranger Hour A ranger talks about the geology and history surrounding the waterfalls.

Date	Attendance	Comments
5/31	25	Great start to Black Eagle Falls Waterfall Hour
6/7	8	
6/14	19	
6/21	17	
6/28	16	
7/5	14	
7/12	6	Slow weekend for all programming
Total	105	Averaged 15 people per program. Increase of
		7 more people per program than in 2007.



Black Eagle Falls Pre-1890



Black Eagle Falls 2008

Rainbow Falls Park Ranger Hour

A ranger talks about the geology and history surrounding the waterfalls.

Date	Attendance	Comments
6/1	35	Great weekend for starting programs
6/8	2	Rained
6/15	36	TV Crew interviewed ranger
6/21	27	
6/29	16	
7/6	16	
7/13	18	
Total	150	Averaged 21 people per program. Increase of
		8 more people per program than in 2007.



Rainbow Falls pre-1910



Rainbow Falls 2008

Guided Hikes

A ranger talks about the flora, fauna and history along the trail.

Date	Attendance	Comments
6/7	8	National Trails Day, Forest Service employees
		guided the hike on Sulphur Spring Trail
6/16	10	State Park Hiking Series (River's Edge Trail)
Total	18	Total was about the same as in 2007



River's Edge Trail follows along the Missouri River



Tables, benches & shelters are located along the River's Edge Trail

Sunday Children's Programs

This year the most popular program decreased in attendance. Regular presenter Chris Dantic only presented four of the programs, which may of led to the lack of participants. The park intern presented the other programs.

Date	Program	Attendance	Comments
6/15	Father's in Nature	12	
6/22	Dissect Owl Pellets	0	Was not in paper
6/29	Montana's Wild Wolf	20	TV crew
7/6	The Busy Beaver	16	
7/13	Scat & Tracks	20	
7/18	Wildlife Viewing	16	
7/27	Grizzly Bear	23	
8/3	Don't Feed the Wildlife	0	
8/10	Bad Camp vs. Good Camp	0	
8/17	Book it with Tracks	21	Good conclusion
Total		128	Decreased by over 100 participants from 2007



Park Ranger Chris Dantic presents a program on the Grizzly Bear

Giant Springs State Park Guided Tours

Past data showed waterfall hour programs after mid-July were not well attended. A new program was added to fill the slot as 30-minute guided tours of Giant Springs State Park attracted over 30 participants in this first season program.

These tours were comprised of the Silver Smelter area, fish hatchery visitor center, and the Giant Springs.

Date	Attendance	Comments
7/19	0	Was not listed in newspaper events for the day
7/26	12	
8/2	0	Fair Week always brings a decrease in attendance
8/9	12	
8/16	8	
Total	32	



Beautiful Giant Springs State Park



Tourists enjoyed learning about the former smelter

Outreach & Special Events

Many agencies, local clubs and other groups contact Region 4 parks for programs.

Date	Group & Program	Attendance	Comments
6/7	MT Fish, Wildlife & Parks and	12	Project was part of
	Pennsylvania Power & Light of MT,		the National Trials
	North Shore Trail Project		Day event
6/14	Many agencies, 1 st Annual Giant	34	Forest Service,
	Springs State Park Weed Pull was		PPLM, Cascade Co.
	part of National Get Outdoors Day		Weed Mang.
6/20	FWP teamed up with the CM Russell	9	Camp kids came to
	Children Art Camp once a month		park for program
			and art projects
6/26	FWP and the Great Falls public	52	Large crowd and
	library teamed up again as the		the children made
	ranger presented a butterfly		butterfly masks
	program for their summer series		
6/28	19 th Annual Lewis & Clark Festival	893	Consistent
	Encampment at Giant Springs SP		attendance
6/28	Giant Springs State Park	50	Panels are
	Interpretive Signs Dedication		beautiful
6/28	Paddle Palooza	100	Fun event
7/14	FWP teamed up with the CM Russell	2	Camp kids came to
	Children Art Camp once a month		park for program
			and art projects
7/16	North American Wildlife	400	Cooperative effort
	Enforcement Officers Association		with Enforcement
	annual conference 5k race & BBQ		Division
7/18	North American Wildlife	700	Cooperative effort
	Enforcement Officers Association		with Enforcement
	skills competition		Division
7/18	North American Wildlife	79	Cooperative effort
	Enforcement Officers Association		with Enforcement
	Giant Springs State Park Tours		Division
8/9	5 th Annual Community Artists Day	783	Slight increase
			from 2007
8/12	FWP teamed up with the CM Russell	12	Camp kids came to
	Children Art Camp once a month		park for program
_			and art projects
N/A	Cambridge Court & Place	72	Four programs on
	Retirement Living		wildlife
N/A	Rainbow Retirement Home	12	Program on bears
N/A	Golden Eagle Retirement Home	42	2 animal programs



A masterpiece created at the 5th Annual Community Artists Day



Ribbon cutting ceremony for the new interpretive signs



North American Wildlife Enforcement Officers Association 5k Race



Children show off their butterfly masks on the library lawn



Closing of the Lewis & Clark Festival

Commercial Tour Groups

Tour groups were about the same as last year as in 2007 Giant Springs State Park took in 9 tours compared to 8 commercial tours in 2008. A total of 197 people took in a tour of Giant Springs State Park. All tours were covered by a FWP permit and paid appropriate fees.

School Programs

Programming is staying consistent with many of the same schools returning.

Recorded Year	Amount of Schools/ Rec Centers	Student Tour Totals
2003	N/A	1,900
2004	39	1,465
2005	55	1,635
2006	59	2,658
2007	59	2,547
2008	57	2,530



Park Ranger using one of the new interpretive panels

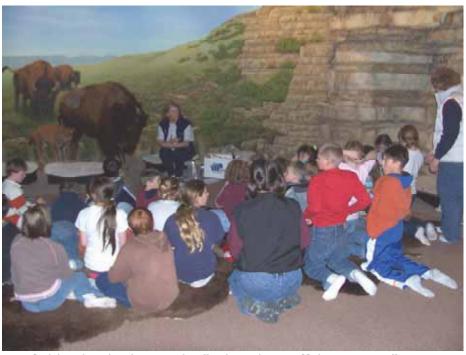


These hawks are hunting the bunnies in this Project Wild activity

Visitation

Summer visitation includes the months of June, July, August and September. September is included because of special events during that month. First Peoples Buffalo Jump State Park was formally known as Ulm Pishkun State Park. The table below compares the summer visitation for years 2005 through 2008.

Summer	First Peoples
Visitation	Buffalo Jump
	State Park
2005	15,725
2006	11,113
2007	9,545
2008	9,734



Fairfield School takes in the "What the Buffalo Became" program

Supper & Speaker Series

A dinner and speaker program was held once per month in June, July and August. The June and August programs were well attended and overall the series was successful.

Month & Day	Attendance
June 21	27
July 19	15
August 16	27
Total	69



Bill Rossiter performs as part of the supper & speaker series July 19, 2008

Guided Hikes

A ranger talks about the flora, fauna and history along the trail.

Date	Attendance	Comments
5/3	20	State Park Hiking Series, great start for the
		hiking series
6/7	7	National Trails Day, led by Park Naturalist,
		Robert Thomson
Total	27	Increase in attendance for 2008

Weekend Jump Talks

The regularly scheduled weekend jump talks were very well attended in 2008. Jump Talks were scheduled on Saturdays and Sundays from July 12 to August 24. Saturday talks were scheduled for 11 AM and 2 PM; Sunday talks were scheduled for 1 PM and 3 PM.

Month & Day	Daily Attendance
July 12	0
July 13	0
July 19	67
July 20	10
July 26	16
July 27	6
August 2	11
August 3	18
August 9	19
August 10	13
August 16	28
August 17	15
August 23	7
August 24	5
Total	215



A State Park Ranger explains the buffalo jump to visitors

School Programs

Schools visit the buffalo jump almost year round, but most classes come to the buffalo jump between April and October. In addition to scheduled school tours arranged by teachers and educators, First Peoples Buffalo Jump offers Archaeo Days in April and Culture Days in September, with programs designed primarily for 4th and 5th grade classes.

Total Students visiting FPBJ	Number of different classes visiting FPBJ
2885	87



Students from Moore School identify "artifacts" uncovered from the dig boxes at First Peoples Buffalo Jump State Park

September Culture Days

Each September Culture Days is held at First Peoples Buffalo Jump State Park. Programs are offered for elementary school students as well as for adults. In 2008 Culture Days programs included Culture Days for Kids (numbers for Culture Days for Kids included in School Programs on previous page), the First Nations Education Series, the annual Montana Mammoth Hunt Atlatl Event and the annual First Peoples Buffalo Jump Atlatl Event. In past years the Mammoth Hunt was held in June or July, but was moved to September this year to avoid the heat of summer. Having two atlatl events within two weeks was apparently successful as both events were well attended.

First Nations Education Series

Day	Attendance
September 6	15
September 7	23
September 13	13
September 14	7
September 20	16
September 21	28
Total	102



Participants in the annual Mammoth Hunt get pointers from volunteer Jim Ray

Night at the Pishkun

For the second year in a row, First Peoples Buffalo Jump State Park held a sleepover for children ages 9-13, and once again it was a successful event.

Sleep-over	Attendance
June 14	15



Campers sleeping in the classroom at FPBJ during Night at the Pishkun

Group Tours

A number of group tours ranging from alumni groups, to clubs, to Elder Hostel programs came to First Peoples Buffalo Jump State Park in 2008. Over half of the tour groups coming to the park requested at least an introduction to the park for the tour participants.

Group Tours	Tour Participants
32	798

Special Events

First Peoples Buffalo Jump State Park hosted several special events in 2008, including a Supper & Speaker Series (see previous page), Culture Days in September (see previous page), Night at the Pishkun (see above), and a presentation by Arch Ellwein of Sidney, MT.

Special Events	Total Attendance
5	578



Arch Ellwein as "Buffalo" Vic Smith at FPBJSP

Sluice Boxes State Park

Visitation

Summer visitation includes the months of June, July and August. The table below compares the summer visitation for years 2005 through 2008.

Summer	Sluice Boxes
Visitation	State Park
2005	6,106
2006	6,774
2007	7,307
2008	6,769



Child answers questions to earn a junior ranger badge



Close to 30 hikers participated in the annual hike

Sluice Boxes State Park

Roving Ranger Day

Roving Ranger Day consists of a park ranger stationed at Sluice Boxes State Park on Saturdays from 9 am to 4 pm answering questions, handing out brochures and giving children the chance to earn a junior ranger badge.

The most attended Roving Ranger Day in 2007 took place at Sluice Boxes State Park. From the recorded data it was decided to focus Roving Ranger Day mainly at Sluice Boxes State Park for the 2008 season.

Date	Attendance	Comments
6/20	40	Beautiful day to start Roving Ranger Day
6/28	N/A	Canceled due to Lewis & Clark Festival
7/5	112	
7/13	N/A	Canceled due to shortage of help
7/19	74	
7/26	77	
8/2	48	Slow as it was fair week
8/9	15	Art Day at Giant Springs so there for ½ day
8/16	101	
8/23	51	
Total	518	Averaged 65 people per day

State Park Hiking Series

State Park Hiking Series was moved to evenings and by hiking later in the day attendance increased at most hikes including the Sluice Boxes State Park hike.

Date	Attendance	Comments
9/23	28	Everyone commented how great the hike was
Total	28	



Riceville Bridge Parking



Bears & Brochures



Hikers crossing Belt Creek

Tower Rock State Park

Visitation

Summer visitation includes the months of June, July and August. The table below compares the summer visitation for years 2006 through 2008.

Summer	Tower Rock
Visitation	State Park
2005	N/A
2006	3,055
2007	4,148
2008	3,953

Guided Hikes

State Park Hiking Series was moved to evenings and by hiking later in the day attendance increased at most hikes excluding Tower Rock State Park. This hike was guided on a Friday night. The Saturday night hikes were better attended.

Date	Attendance	Comments
6/7	12	Volunteer guided hike on National Trails Day
7/18	3	Friday nights were not well attended
Total	28	



National Trails Day hike attendees



Deer feeding at Tower Rock

Leave No Child Inside

There is growing evidence that many American children are becoming increasingly less likely to experience the natural world through physical outdoor activities. Staying active outdoors increases not only creativity but also helps decrease the potential of being overweight. Richard Louv's book "Last Child in the Woods," has sparked a major interest in understanding why a decreasing number of children know about the natural world and why they are not experiencing the great outdoors.

Louv's book describes "nature deficit disorder" which contributes to not only obesity in children but also attention deficit hyperactivity. Many schools have shortened recess and/or reduced budgets for physical education. Recently the U.S. House of Representatives passed the Leave No Child Inside Act. It still must pass the senate and be signed into law but this act, if passed, will help many states improve the welfare of children by introducing them to outside activities. This act will hopefully once again connect children and nature.

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks has already taken a large step to ensure that children are given opportunities to experience the outdoors. In April 2008 the Children and Nature Action Plan was created by Montana State Parks and on September 23, 2008 the Montana Children and Nature Summit took place in Helena, Montana.

The action plan by the Parks Division was created to lead a statewide effort in reconnecting children and nature through regional, community driven programs and the development of effective partnerships. To kick off efforts a new junior ranger activity program was constructed called Kids Under the Big Sky (K.U.B.S.). The Montana Children and Nature Summit brought in teachers, community members, agency representatives and more to discuss the importance of making sure children do not lose their connection with nature.

Region 4 Parks Division has also played an important role in making sure children are experiencing the outdoors and staying fit. In 2007 Region 4 Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Cascade County Physical Activity Council, also known as Get Fit Great Falls. FWP has been with the committee since 2006 and has partnered with many agencies, clubs and other organizations in making sure no child is left inside.

The Region 4 Parks Division has worked closely with interagency partners by sponsoring guided hikes at state parks on National Trails Day, helping staff Winter Trails Day, leading Summer Hiking Series trips, hosting summer day camps at Giant Springs State Park, and hosting a "Night at the Pishkun" sleepover at First Peoples Buffalo Jump State Park. This past summer FWP teamed up with the CM Russell Museum Education and Program Division. Children traveled to Giant Springs State Park and received a wildlife program and then created an art project. FWP is looking to support more programs of this type in the future.

State Park Activities

Below are photographs of children that have participated in past activities. Fish, Wildlife & Parks has added children programs or activities at Giant Springs State Park, First Peoples Buffalo Jump State Park, Sluice Boxes State Park, Tower Rock State Park and FWP had a special event for students at Ackley Lake State Park.



Looking at a bull snake along the river



Shelby draws a picture in the park



Staying warm in Giant Springs?



Rangers playing tag with the camp kids



Children take one of the hikes



Lesson taught at the fish hatchery



Playing with bones at the Buffalo Jump



Children earn junior ranger badges



Leave No Trace Activity



Children clean around Ackley Lake



Looking for aquatic life at Giant Springs



Students participate in Tribal Games

3 Rivers Communications Grant for Education

In April 2008 the Region 4 Parks Department received a grant from 3 Rivers Communications to help bring students to the region's state parks for educational programming. Schools that use 3 Rivers Communications for daily operations from internet to phone use receive reimbursement towards the cost of travel to one state park each school year.

Materials, Facilities & Training

Date	Project or Training	Comments
March 2008	First Peoples Buffalo	Coordinates with markers
	Jump trail guide	that were placed in along
	published	trail in 2007
April – June 2008	22 new interpretive	Signs were dedicated on
	panels were installed in	June 28, 2008
	Giant Springs State Park	
July 2008	Montana Outdoor Ethic	Awards were officially
	Awards, first use in	given to staff to
	Region 4	distribute in Region 4
August 11- 15, 2008	Chris Dantic attended	
	Certified Interpretive	
	Planner Course in Challis,	
	ID	
August 2008	Received Kids Under the	
	Big Sky activity booklets	
September 23, 2008	Chris Dantic attended	Summit was coordinated
	Montana Children &	by Montana Fish, Wildlife
	Nature Summit in Helena	& Parks



New interpretive panel at Rainbow Falls



Park Naturalist, Robert Thomson, explains a tribal game



Montana Outdoor Ethic Award